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MYSELF AND MY RELATIVES.

CHAPTER I.

WE LEAVE LONDON.

'WHY not go to the continent?' asked my mother, raising her eyes from the stocking she was darning.

'Because I detest the continent,' answered my father somewhat shortly. 'If things are cheap there, they are also by no means good. No, no, my dear Ellen, I must try a little farm. I have long wished to live in the country: my health requires that I should leave the dust and smoke of London.'

'There are plenty of watering-places that you could go to,' suggested mamma sighing; 'or you might take lodgings in some farmhouse for the summer.'

'But I want employment, Ellen; I want to economise, and make profit by a farm of our own.'

'Neither of us understands anything of farming, Robert.'

'Well, we can learn.'

Here I ceased working at the doll's bonnet which I held in my hand, to listen attentively to the conversation of my parents. The idea of papa and mamma 'learning' anything at their dignified and advanced age, somewhat puzzled me. I did not then know that the teaching of the indefatigable tutor, Experience, would last as long as life itself.

'I see advertisements every day of small farms to let,' continued papa; 'and I would prefer one in a retired part of the country, not too near a line of railway.'

'I should like that too,' said mamma: 'retirement is what I long for.'

Papa brightened up, happy, no doubt, to have hit upon something right at last; and then he expatiated upon the delights of a country-life with so much fervour, that mamma put away her stocking altogether, and sat listening with eyes fixed mournfully on his face. Papa generally had his own way, as mamma was too indolent to persist in opposing his wishes; and though by no means convinced that a farm would add to our income, she was willing that he should please himself by taking a country-place with a low rent. Therefore it was agreed that we were to leave London as soon as the necessary preparations for our departure should be made.

To me it was all delightfully pleasant and exciting: trunks were packed and roped; mamma was for some days busy from morning till night, often going silently about her work, occasionally uttering peevish remarks, and frequently heaving deep sighs, as she stowed away different articles in boxes for the journey. At length the last day arrived, our last day in a gloomy lodging in London, where we had lived for a long

time. Death had been among us there; within the last year, two of my sisters had been removed from us, leaving a family originally consisting of seven reduced to five—two boys and three girls. My father had also been lately ill, and he was now only recovering a little strength. Towards the close of that last day in the city, he sat at the fire, with an old red silk handkerchief tied on his head, saying very little, and, as usual, appearing thin and pale. Our sitting-room was nearly empty now; it merely contained a few articles of necessary furniture—three or four chairs, a dim threadbare carpet, and an old-fashioned table. The long narrow windows were uncurtained, and through their dim panes I looked out upon the dark houses opposite, and down upon the far distant pavement, thinking all the while how I should say good-bye to that dull street to-morrow morning. Mamma sat silently on one of the chairs, her hands resting on her lap. There was something lugubrious in the stillness of the apartment. Even I was not without my serious reflections. All at once, a knock quick and sharp at the door startled us, and before any one had time to say, 'Come in,' a stranger entered. He was a man of very small stature, much stooped, withered in face, and dressed shabbily: his aspect was that of a reduced tradesman. Papa's face flushed at this intrusion, as mamma, rising with dignity, demanded what the dwarfish man wanted.

'Your name is Keppleton,' he observed, seating himself coolly, and taking off his hat.

'That is my name, sir,' replied papa, standing up and looking much annoyed.

'You're very poor, ain't you?' continued the stranger, surveying the apartment.

'If you have only come here to ask impertinent questions, you had better leave the room,' said papa, flushing a deeper red; 'I do not understand such liberties.'

'Ahem!' coughed the little man, as he drew forth a purse of ponderous dimensions. 'They tell me below that you intend setting out on a journey to-morrow, and perhaps you will like some assistance to help you on the way.'

'Thank you,' said mamma, coming to the rescue, as she saw papa speechless from indignation. 'We are not in want of any assistance; you have mistaken us.'

'Have I? Well, so much the better. But how is it that you could only pay the rent for the last eight months of this lodging yesterday?'

'Really, sir, you take a strange liberty in questioning our affairs,' said papa, trembling with wrath. 'Your friends below must answer for your conduct; they have misled you.'

'As to whom you mean by my friends "below," I cannot divine,' replied the stranger, 'unless you allude to—regions that are not generally alluded to. I have no friends in this house, and I have merely come to offer you money, as I think you want it.'

'Indeed, we do not,' said mamma pityingly, for she feared the man was insane.

'Certainly not,' added papa: 'so you may leave us at once.'

'Very well,' returned the dwarfish individual, rising abruptly; 'I'll go, as you desire it; and I suppose you wouldn't like to hear my name?'

'Not in the least,' replied papa, glancing at the shabby garments of the intruder.

'Good-evening, then,' said the little man, as he put on his hat; 'and remember, good man, that pride has been the ruin of many a fool in the world.'

Smiling grimly, the man now turned the door-latch, when his eye lit upon me, where I stood looking him angrily in the face, and letting go the latch, he put his hand in his pocket and drew out half-a-crown.

'Here, little lady,' said he; 'take this to buy apples or oranges, or something else your parents can't afford to let you have.'

Standing fixedly where I was, and blushing with shame and mortification; I uttered a haughty, 'No, thank you!' and turned away.

Again a queer smile crossed the stranger's face; with a jerk he pulled open the door, and disappeared.

'Who can that impertinent fellow be?' demanded papa when he was gone.

'I cannot tell,' replied mamma.

'He must be an acquaintance of the people below stairs, though he disclaims their friendship.'

'Perhaps so. Or could he be?'—Mamma stopped, and glanced at me.

'Be what, Ellen?' said papa nervously.

'It is nonsense to finish the sentence,' continued mamma, smiling slightly. 'I was only thinking that strange man might have been'—Again she paused and looked at me, and then rising, whispered something in papa's ear.

'Nonsense, Ellen!—nonsense indeed!' he cried, pacing the room hurriedly.

After the lapse of five minutes so passed, he rang the bell, and our female attendant—a somewhat sooty-faced damsel, with unkempt locks—appeared to answer the summons.

'Who was that man who was here about ten minutes ago?' demanded papa.

'I don't know, sir; I never saw him before.'

'Was he not an acquaintance of your master or mistress?'

'No, sir; missus never saw him to her knowledge before. I took him for a mechanic, or something of that sort, sir. I thought he was coming with a bill, as he inquired very particular for you and the lady.'

'You may go now,' said papa, walking to the window, and looking up and down the street. But the silence of evening was falling without; few passers-by appeared on the pavement; a star trembled in the sky above. Long did my father stand with his forehead leaning against the window-sash.

'Papa,' said I, touching his arm at last, 'are you looking for the little man that was so impertinent?'

He started round, caught my hand, and drew me to a seat near the fire, where we chatted away while mamma made the tea.

The next day we left London.

CHAPTER II. WESTON CRICKET.

Sharp-eyed, sharp-eared, and inquisitive as children may be, mighty things are done without their knowledge by their elders. They live in a shadowy world—misty, confused, indistinct. How it happened that we procured a little cottage standing

in a tiny lawn in a remote part of the country, I knew not, neither did I particularly care. The journey to it is still nearly fresh in my memory. The first part of it was performed by railway; and then came what I liked better—travelling in a stage-coach with large red wheels; a fat coachman, with monster capes to his overcoat; and an asthmatic-voiced guard, whose horn sounded full and clear when we swept through quiet villages far from the great city. With what delight my brothers, my sisters, and I crowded to the coach-windows to look out when the vehicle stopped to change horses at quaint hosteleries by the wayside! Happy days for us were those when a journey could only bring amusement unalloyed by a single thought of responsibility! On arriving at Farnley, a town that lay within six miles of our new residence, the coach deposited us at the inn there, and from thence we proceeded in a fly to our home. Again the delight of my brothers, sisters, and myself was intense when we reached our cottage, with its small doors, small windows, and small rooms. It was already furnished, and a fire gave a cheerful aspect to our parlour, where our servant had prepared tea; for, as I afterwards learned, my father had purchased the furniture of the last tenant at a valuation, and our landlord at Farnley had hired a servant for us; so that mamma was spared some trouble by these arrangements. Full of delightful plans, I retired to rest that night in a little unpainted wooden-bed in a closet off the parlour, which was destined for my sleeping-room; and next day my ecstasies were increased hourly. Papa took us all to walk round the fields, and he told us we might have little gardens of our own if we wished it, as well as hens, chickens, pigeons, and rabbits. In the course of the afternoon, our servant Rachel came to say that our neighbour, Mrs Webb, the wife of a farmer who lived quite near, had sent us a present of a dog to guard our premises at night, and also a hen with twelve chickens only a week old! Papa was nearly as much amused with these gifts as any of us, and he went over to Thorn Grange to thank Mrs Webb for her kindness, a politeness that the good woman never afterwards forgot. In due course of time, cows, calves, and pigs arrived on our premises, and the farmyard became a charming resort. We became intimate friends of the workmen, who promised to catch black-birds for us, and make cages for them, when summer came. What happiness it was when we discovered our first bird's-nest in a gooseberry-bush about the end of April!

Of the village of Weston Cricket, which lay within a few minutes' walk of our cottage, we knew but little, save what we saw of its houses through the trees that flanked our garden northward, or from the hill-field where our cattle grazed. My mother never once walked through it, as she preferred, when going to church, to take the route through the park of Weston Cricket, whose high wall stood opposite our gate. To me that park seemed a mysterious and wonderful place. No one lived there but the caretaker, Jack Gunley, whose abode was a Gothic gate-house, yellow and out of repair. He was a cross-grained individual, who waged war furiously against all people entering the demesne to gather sticks. The report of his gun, fired regularly off every evening as a warning to intruders, often sent a thrill of horror through my heart. Sometimes, on Sunday evenings, mamma allowed Rachel to take my brothers, and sisters, and myself to walk in this demesne; and I loved such rambles very much; the very neglected state of the grounds charmed me: there was something romantic in the high overgrown boxwood, the tangled copses, the thick plantations, where the light of the sun could scarce struggle through the tree-branches; and then there were wonderful stories of its former owners—their grandeur, their coaches, their gay visitors, and balls—the brilliant days when three carriages conveyed the company to the poor

little country church, now so deserted of anybody that could be called even 'genteel.' Let me say a word or two of that country church, reader, for circumstances connected with it had a strange influence on my future years. It was a plain, unpretending building, without ornament inside or outside, standing in its grave-yard, where the grass always looked fresh and green. The walls were white-washed within and without, and no graceful carving met the eye at any point. The pews were all in a line, at each side of the aisle, so narrow as to contain only one form, which could accommodate about five persons; the only pews which had doors to them being those at the head of each line—namely, that appropriated to the clergyman's family, and the one belonging to the owner of Weston Cricket, which, in the absence of that individual and all his family, was given over to us, we being the only people in the rank of gentry in the immediate neighbourhood. The clergyman, Mr Horne, and his wife, called on papa and mamma; but as the latter did not return Mrs Horne's visit, of course she never repeated it; and thus we lived in a state of seclusion even deeper than it might have been in that lonely spot. The Hornes had no children, and the worthy vicar often had pupils living in his house—youths whose ages ranged from ten to sixteen. These young gentlemen were always of respectable families; but one youth particularly struck my fancy: his air was noble; his face beautiful as an ideal vision; his eyes soft, meditative, charming; his fair hair wavy and soft as a girl's; his figure faultless—at least so I thought at my discerning age of ten years. I am perfectly convinced that this boy never once noticed myself in particular at the little church of Weston Cricket; yet to me his presence there, Sunday after Sunday, was fraught with interest—an interest, too, wholly unconnected with an idea of self. I regarded him as one might have regarded a work of art. He was a poetic passage to me—a glimpse into a higher sphere. I invested him with marvellous attributes, and felt convinced that he would no more think of cheating Mr Horne with his lessons, or of robbing an orchard, than he would dream of flying. It was very long before I could find out his name, for I shrank from asking any one respecting it. Having even at that tender age read more than one novel, I knew very well what falling in love was, and I thought I must surely have been in love with my hero, which made me afraid to breathe a word of him to mortal, even to my brother Edward, who was a year older than myself, or to my sister Anna, who was two years younger. If anybody alluded to Mr Horne's pupils, I trembled; and if there was a direct conversation touching them, I was always obliged to leave the room. Strange infatuation! Yet I never dreamed of speaking to the object of my adoration; to think of him was enough. Long did his image remain engraven on my memory. I think I see that little church now, reader, as it appeared to me in those days; Mr Horne, with his placid countenance and simple manner, preaching the sermon, which I fear I never listened to; good Mrs Horne, sitting at the head of her pew, wearing the large black bonnet and unpretending cloak which were the unfailing adjuncts of her outdoor costume for years; and then my beautiful youth, looking so distinct among his companions, so aristocratic, so unmistakably of gentle blood. Upon one memorable occasion, I dropped my prayer-book when going out of church; my hero passed by at the time, and though walking with a friend, he stooped and picked it up; but, ah! reader, he did not give it to myself, he handed it, with a sweet smile and a graceful little bow, to mamma! The action charmed me, and it had also its effect on my mother. When she came home, she mentioned the occurrence to papa, observing that Mr Horne had got a very gentlemanly pupil—a handsome boy, who looked as if he belonged to the higher-order of society.

'Yes,' said papa; 'I know the lad you mean; his name is Goad—Curzon Goad; he is of a very good family; his mother was a daughter of Lord Lugmore.'

'Indeed!' said mamma. 'I thought he was not like the other boys.'

Nothing more remarkable was said; but I had heard enough. My charming youth was well-born, and his name was Curzon Goad.

CHAPTER III.

DIFFICULTIES AT HOME.

Now, though my father and mother were undeniably poor, they were both proud, and their pride descended to their children. We all learned to look with reverence at a picture that hung in our drawing-room, just over the old sofa (which always stood crookedly, from having a caster off it). It represented an ancient castle with battlements, loop-holes, and turrets, standing in a fine park; and when we knew that it was a picture of the place where mamma had lived in her youth, as the granddaughter of the owner, we naturally felt that we were rather above the common herd. Why it was that mamma never went to that fine castle, or heard from any one living there, only puzzled me when I grew older. My father was a reserved man; he rarely spoke of his early years; but I knew that, in his youth, he had been in a foreign service, though he scarcely ever alluded to anything that occurred when he was abroad. He was a kind man, and his children loved him truly. My mother was kind also, but of a most unemonstrative nature; her affection for us was expressed by actions, never by words; she rarely kissed or fondled us, yet we felt we were dear to her. People would not have thought us a well-brought-up family: we were allowed to do pretty much as we pleased, for my mother's energies were exhausted in her endeavours to feed and clothe us, and she could not afford a governess. She taught us a few lessons every day, and made my sisters and myself do a little needlework. We were punished if we told falsehoods, and slapped if we broke a cup or a window by accident, or, in fighting with each other, tore our clothes in the mêlée; so that we knew we did wrong when we rent our pinafores, told lies, or made too much noise. We were rarely neatly dressed, neither was our simple cottage a pattern of cleanliness. Having only one servant, who was very young and ignorant, my mother had to perform much of the household-work herself. A weary life it must have been for her. We were all accustomed to see cobwebs hanging from the corners of ceilings, and draping the walls behind window-shutters and cupboards; and, like the philosopher Spinoza, one of our amusements consisted in giving flies to the large spiders that dwelt in remote recesses of our rooms. The retired situation of the cottage prevented our having any visitors. The only person who came to make an occasional call was good Mr Horne, whom no coldness of manner on mamma's part could keep away. In his ministerial character he frequently came to see us, and then mamma put on her best cap and shawl before going to receive him; while we young people generally ran away and hid, because we knew we were not fit to be seen. Sometimes he asked to see us; and then mamma ran in hurriedly to the room where we were all gathered together, and after a swift process of combing and brushing, and changing of pinafores, we would be conducted to the drawing-room, to have our hands shaken by Mr Horne, who usually made a remark upon our quick growth, ending with a hope that we were good children, which we knew very well we were not.

That papa's farming-operations did not turn out very profitable, I soon learned from sundry snatches of conversation between him and mamma, which I

heard in my little closet bedroom, when I lay awake after retiring for the night. Upon one occasion, I heard mamma say: 'Well, Robert, if things turn out as badly next year as they have done this year, we will be beggared. Instead of making any profit by the farm, we are losing heavily.'

'That is because we have not sufficient capital,' replied papa: 'another hundred or so would set us up. The land wants top-dressing, and we should buy more cattle.'

'But, my dear Robert, we have already spent three hundred and fifty pounds of our capital—you know we have not another hundred remaining.'

'I must borrow the money,' said papa; 'otherwise we shall indeed be losers.'

'Keep out of debt, if possible,' said mamma in a trembling voice. 'Recollect that the boys ought soon to go to school, and then we must think of some profession for Edward; he is nearly twelve years old.'

'Ah, Ellen, I think of all that; my mind is harassed by such reflections! Don't you know it is for the sake of our children that I wish to make a little money? Night and day, I am tortured thinking of the dark future which may await them. In spite of my efforts, I fear they must all earn their bread as they best can—boys and girls alike.'

Mamma then rose and closed the door of communication between my closet and the parlour, which prevented my hearing any more that night. I had heard enough, however, to make me feel sad at heart. I pitied poor papa and mamma; and after shedding some tears, fell asleep while engaged in forming some plans for the future advancement of my family. After that night, I endeavoured to lessen mamma's housekeeping expenses as well as I could. I ceased to take sugar in my tea, and prevailed on my sisters Anna and Rosa to follow my example; by which means we saved at least a shilling a week. There was little use, however, in our endeavours to stint ourselves in bread and butter, for we only found that if we ate a sparing breakfast, we were necessitated to eat a particularly hearty dinner. Neither mamma nor papa knew anything of these plans; and as Edward and Bobby did not choose to abandon sugar in their tea, we did not confide much in them. A respectable man at Weston Cricket, who had formerly superintended the village-school, taught my brothers for a few hours each day for a very trifling remuneration. I took an interest in their studies, and often assisted them in their lessons, in return for which Edward taught me some Latin and Euclid. Of geography, I was particularly fond; it revealed such wonders of far-off lands—telling of great cities standing at the present time, wide-spreading forests, and fathomless oceans, that like the hungry wretch who may feel consolation in reading a cookery-book, I, in the solitude of my home, shut out from the noise and bustle of life, fancied I was travelling through foreign lands while reading the geography, or tracing the position of different countries on the map. I had a wild, roving spirit, and an enthusiasm that neither of my brothers shared. Sometimes, while standing out at night in the little lawn in front of our cottage, I have clasped my hands in wonder, while thinking of the many, many distant lands which perhaps I was doomed never to behold.

'Is there really a world beyond this little enclosure?' I have said to myself while the stars twinkled in the summer sky above me. 'Must I always live here, remote from the busy scenes of life?' And then the wind would sigh with a plaintive wail through the tall firs and low shrubs around me, and the smooth laurel leaves would glisten in the starlight. All was silence and peace, but I valued it not. One of my favourite stories in childhood was *Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia*. What interest I took in that good daughter, who travelled over so many frozen miles to procure the liberty of a beloved father!

Yet with all my romantic feelings, I had dark spots

in my disposition. Occasionally, I got into very common-place ill-temper, during which I did not scruple to fall out with my brothers and sisters; and even my mother once or twice came under my heavy displeasure. I grieved over these ebullitions of bad humour when they were over, but that did not keep them from returning. The reader who expects to find in me a heroine without fault, will be sadly disappointed as he or she turns over these pages.

I often wondered secretly if my father borrowed the hundred pounds he had spoken of to my mother. I might have known he did by the additional cattle which arrived on the farm, and also by the increased look of haggard care which pervaded mamma's countenance. Nobody could dread to be in debt more than my mother, for she was of a hopeless disposition, that always seemed to see the dark-side of everything.

Although I lost much of my first delight in our country-place as time rolled on, there was always something to amuse me in it. Each season brought its charms; and even I could find pleasure in riding over the fields on a donkey's back. The Sundays came and went, and for two years I had the happiness of seeing Curzon Goad in our little church every Sabbath morning: he did not, during that time, leave the vicarage for vacations like the other youths. I sometimes wondered if he had any home, when I saw him looking solitary in the pew by himself in the beautiful summer months and at Christmas. At such times I thought he looked melancholy, with a dreamy sadness over his face. Once, when Rachel, Anna, and I were rambling through the demesne of Weston Cricket, we met him walking alone; he was reading a book as he went along, and even Rachel remarked that he was 'a nice young gentleman.' That was an event in my life, the more memorable, as he never appeared at church afterwards. It was the last time I saw him for many a long year. He was then about sixteen, and he left the vicarage to pursue his studies elsewhere. What a blank there was to me then! When he was gone, I thought of him even oftener than before, but never in sorrow. I had not the presumption to fret about his departure; but when I read a poem that carried me away beyond earth, or sat in summer evenings in the green warm fields, with the lazy hum of insects in my ear, my thoughts nearly always turned to the memory of that fair-haired, dreamy-looking youth, who seemed the embodiment of a beautiful idea. One day, some weeks after he had gone away, Mr Horne came to see us, and as I happened to be dressed more neatly than usual, I remained in the drawing-room during his visit. Suddenly, I was startled by the good man saying: 'Well, Mrs Keppleton, I have lost my favourite pupil, Curzon Goad.'

'Have you?' said mamma. 'He was a good-looking boy, and seemed to have much politeness.'

'Yes, and cleverness too. He was the quickest lad I ever taught, with the gentleness of a girl; and yet—what do you think, Mrs Keppleton?—his great wish is to go into the army: all my reasoning would not make him relinquish that notion.'

'He will make a fine-looking officer,' said mamma, who loved the army, as her own father had served his country in a high military rank.

'Yes; he is a well-looking lad; but his talents might shine brighter in some more intellectual profession. His mother, I believe, wished him particularly to enter the church.'

'There have been clever men in the army, Mr Horne,' said mamma, colouring a little.

'Oh, undoubtedly; far too many, I fear. They are lost in the military profession, you know. Any man with only three ideas could get on in the army. Just put a red coat on his back, and a sword at his side, and there he is—fit to idle his life away, or run a man through, as the case may require!'

Mamma laughed at this speech, and I laughed too,

upon which he turned round and said: 'Now, Miss Jessie, what are your notions on the subject? Like all young ladies, by and by, you will give your eyes for a red-coated husband, with gilt epaulets and an empty head!'

Of course I blushed up to the roots of my hair; and I felt glad when mamma addressed Mr Horne by asking if Master Goad's father and mother were alive. 'No,' replied he; 'they are both dead, poor boy; but he has a grand-uncle who acts as his guardian, and from him he has large expectations—several thousands a year.'

'Indeed?' said mamma, her eye brightening at the thought of so much money. 'Has he any brothers or sisters?'

'No; he is an only child.'

'Then I suppose he has a large property independent of his grand-uncle?'

'No; hardly anything at all. His father died in great debt—almost ruined; but his mother was able to leave him two or three hundred a year, I believe. That is very little for a youth of his rank, especially as his father at one time possessed nine thousand a year.'

When Mr Horne got up to go away, I felt that I envied his knowledge of Curzon Goad's family and affairs. How very shy I must have been, sitting there in the drawing-room in my short-frock, with my hair brushed simply off my forehead, looking so innocent and childlike, yet filled with thoughts which no one knew of but myself! About this time, I began to wonder why it was that we were so poor, when it was evident that mamma had seen better-days, and that her ancestors had been very grand people. One day I took the opportunity of asking my mother a few questions while she was beating up eggs for a butter-pudding in the kitchen, the servant, Rachel, being out.

'Mamma,' said I, 'I am sure you never used to do such things when you were young.'

'No,' replied she; 'I was not so useful when I was young.'

'But there is no use in beating up eggs, if you have a servant that can do it as well. Had you any servants to attend you when you were young?'

'Too many perhaps; I never did anything for myself—my maid saved me all trouble.'

'What would you have thought of beating up eggs in those days, mamma?'

Mamma smiled. 'I should as soon have thought of selling them.'

'And yet you seem quite accustomed to this way of living. How could you ever grow resigned to a little cottage like this, after having lived at the castle which belonged to your grandfather?'

'We can learn to resign ourselves to every reverse of fortune by degrees,' said mamma, sighing, as she beat the eggs so quickly that some of the yellow frothy fluid was nearly jumping out of the bowl.

'Well, I don't think, mamma, that I could ever grow reconciled to living in a worse place than this cottage—a hut, for instance, with no window in it, and only straw for my bed.'

'You don't know what you will have to be reconciled to yet,' said my mother. 'Will you try if that pot is boiling—No, stay; I will do it myself; you may burn your hands;' and my mother, approaching the fire, peered into the great black pot as if she had been a kitchen-maid all her life. I remarked how bony and brown her hands were, as she held the lid of the pot aloft—the fingers no longer delicately shaped or slender topped, but hard and determined looking, like old warriors that had undergone a long campaign. Glancing at my own little hands, so fair and soft, I wondered if they would ever grow hard like those warrior-hands.

'Why are we so poor, mamma?' I asked at length with a mighty effort.

'Hush!' said mamma, holding up her finger, for Rachel was now heard approaching, and I had to flee the kitchen, as mamma never liked us to associate with servants. It grieved me that she was so averse to confide in me.

'She thinks me too young,' thought I, and I was determined to act in such a way as would convince her of my sense and steadiness. I commenced teaching my sisters very long lessons every day, insisting on their preserving uncommonly strict rules with reference to smooth hair and tidy frocks, which were, perhaps, not very agreeable to them; but on account of my seniority of age, I was obeyed and looked up to with deference. My example was followed in everything, so if they were not remarkably good girls, reader, you may know whom to blame. For one week I studied myself, at the rate of six or seven hours per diem, and Edward and I had remarkably learned conversations upon all topics. We talked of astronomy at night when the stars shone, and during the day preserved a dignified demeanour—awe-inspiring to the junior members of the family.

My father was nearly always occupied with the business of the farm, which worried him much. I saw silver streaks mingling with the dark luxuriance of his hair; and when I called to mind that he was working hard to support his children and provide respectably for them, I felt my heart often torn with pity.

COMPARATIVE RESPIRATION.

THE air we breathe, subtle and invisible as it is, contains elements which have the property of separating themselves from each other, and of entering into composition with living creatures, according to the proportion required for the carrying on of their vital functions. Everything that has life, whether it be vegetable or animal, by the very use of its organs, causes a waste of their substance which requires constant renewal. In animals, the waste is denoted by an excess of carbon, which must be expelled from the system, and by a diminution of oxygen, a fresh supply of which must be constantly kept up. This is accomplished by means of a law according to which gases of different densities, that are not disposed to unite chemically, have a strong tendency to mutual admixture. If a bladder of hydrogen be placed in a vessel of carbonic acid, a certain quantity of hydrogen will pass out of the bladder, and a still larger amount of carbonic acid will enter therein. This interchange of gases through a thin membranous substance goes on the more rapidly as there is a greater difference of density between the gases. All animals are supplied with such a membranous substance in one or more parts of their body, through which carbonic acid may be expelled and oxygen imbibed, for the maintenance of the balance of life.

Indeed, even in the vegetable world, there is a constant interchange of gases going on; the leaves of plants giving off oxygen in the sun-light, and absorbing carbonic acid from the atmosphere, carbon being an important element of food for the plant. There have been counted as many as seven millions of leaves on an oak-tree, each leaf having hundreds of thousands of pores, through which pass the gases for the maintenance of vegetable life. The fresh-water algae in our ponds absorb carbon from the water, and by so doing, purify it from decayed matter; hence fishes are most healthy in those ponds where there are aquatic plants.

Though all animals require means for parting with carbon, and for obtaining a fresh supply of oxygen, yet the extent of their wants in this respect varies greatly in degree. According to the temperature of the body, and the activity of their habits, will be the generation of carbonic acid requiring expulsion, and the demand for a renewal of oxygen; also, this will

be affected by the widely varied habits of animated creatures, some living in water, and some on land, while some are amphibious, and others have wings for flight. These differences have necessitated an extensive variety in the breathing-mechanism, so that, whatever its habits, and wherever its home, every living being may be able to obtain that amount of oxygen which is necessary for its life, and to get rid of the noxious surplus of carbon. Deeply interesting is it to notice the varied structure of the respiratory organs in the different classes of animals, and their marvellous adaptation to the wants of each, exemplifying as they do the skill of the Great Creator, and the beautiful harmony of all His laws!

Those creatures which live in the water are cold, and often have no red corpuscles in the blood; especially is this the case with molluscs, which lead so inactive a life; therefore, they do not require a large supply of oxygen to their system, and find a sufficient medium of respiration in the water which surrounds them, and which contains enough oxygen for the purpose. The lowest in the scale of animated beings that has a special provision for aerating the system, is the class to which belong the star-fish, medusa, &c., from the digestive organs of which are communications with the outer disc of the fish, where cilia or small hairs are attached, that convey to the animal a fresh supply of oxygen through the medium of the water. The common sea-urchin, and such animals as are covered with a hard shell through which no gases can pass, are provided with a membrane between the shell and the viscera, that contains minute ramifications from the body, and to which water is admitted through openings in the shell for the purpose of respiration. In the ordinary bivalves, as the oyster, muscle, &c., there are, near the mouth of the shell, innumerable cilia, on the part commonly called the beard, which are constantly in motion, and which edge four ribbon-like folds containing the blood to be exposed to the surrounding water; likewise the shells of these molluscs are provided with not less than two apertures, one for drawing in, and the other for expelling the water, while each opening is furnished with a long tube or siphon, through which water may be obtained or ejected when the animal is buried in the sand. In the class containing crabs and lobsters, the mode of respiration is somewhat similar, but confined to one organ, and contained in a separate cavity, where, through two orifices, the water finds ingress and egress, being propelled by a valve which by its movements occasions a constant flow of water over the internal gills. In the crustacea adapted to live on land, the gills require additional care to keep them moist for the purpose of respiration; hence, the orifices of the bronchial cavity are reduced in size, that evaporation may take place slowly; also, the membrane lining the bronchial cavity of land-crabs is folded in such a manner as to contain a large amount of fluid; besides this, land-crabs by instinct always frequent a damp situation.

Fishes, again, living as they do wholly in the water, have a different arrangement of the breathing-mechanism. Though cold-blooded, and obtaining from the water as much oxygen as they need, yet their rapid movements indicate a fuller aeration of the system than in the species we have already noticed; indeed, so aerated is it that their blood is furnished with red corpuscles which can convey oxygen and carbonic acid. The gills, connected with the cavity of the mouth, and covered by a bony lid, are disposed in laminae fringed like the plume of a feather, which must be kept moist, or else the transference of gases cannot go on, and hence fishes taken out of the water, not being able to breathe, soon die. The gills being constantly and thoroughly bathed by the current of water over them, oxygen is taken up into the system, and the blood purified to the extent required. The air-bladder, which is wanting in those

fishes that remain at the bottom of the water, is not necessarily connected with the respiratory organs, excepting in the case of those fresh-water fishes that have a windpipe for the passage of air, and which sometimes come to the surface to breathe.

Of insects it may be remarked, that they do not obtain air through the mouth, which is therefore to them no organ of sound, but one for biting and taking food. Their rapid motion requires that their system should be well oxygenised; hence, according to the nature and habits of the insect, air is admitted to the body through several distinct apertures, and carried by a minutely distributed system of tubes, which ramify through even the smallest organs, to all the tissues, whilst at certain parts they dilate into little bags of various degrees of size. In those insects which sustain long flight, as the bee, these air-bags are most developed, perhaps to render their bodies lighter, and perhaps to supply them with more air when some of the external apertures are closed. The wings of insects are covered with very minute tubes, which are connected with their system of respiration, and which become very much distended during flight. There is great variety in the breathing-mechanism as regards the larva of insects. In the larva of the gnat, the last segment of the abdomen is prolonged into a tube, the mouth of which remains above the water while the body is immersed. Sometimes the air-tube is fringed with bristles, which entangle a bubble of air sufficient to support respiration, while the little creature descends to the very bottom of the water, the large vessels connected with this tube conveying the air over all the body. In spiders, as in scorpions, the breathing-pores do not open into a system of air-tubes, as is generally the case with insects, but into distinct sacs disposed along the sides of the abdomen, and to which the air has immediate access: these sacs, having the rudiments of minute cells, are somewhat like lungs, for the blood of the insect is brought to them, and duly oxygenised.

The lungs of the several orders of reptiles are, for the most part, capacious sacs, which, in those of the class to which the turtle and tortoise belong, have an incipient subdivision. In the lung of the frog, the lower part is a mere sac, while at the upper part many smaller sacs are developed, by which arrangement the surface is increased to a great extent. Some reptiles, and amongst them the frog, having no diaphragm, are obliged to fill their lungs by a process which resembles swallowing, as may be observed from the never-ceasing movement of the under part of its jaw; and thus the most effectual mode of suffocating a frog is by holding its mouth open for a short time, so that it can no longer respire. In serpents, the breathing-apparatus consists of a long cylindrical sac, furnished in part with minute air-cells that communicate with each other, and with the general cavity. The capacity of this sac, and the mobility of their ribs, together with their muscularity, enable them to take in a considerable quantity of air. The hissing noise by which serpents sometimes alarm their prey, is caused by the long-continued expulsion of air after the lungs have been fully inflated. As regards water-serpents, the large volume of air contained in the body tends to render them buoyant, and also supplies them during their immersion. In the saurian reptiles, the lungs shew increasing development, and, as they advance up to the crocodile, become more subdivided into cells: also in these monsters the lungs are confined to the thoracic region, and some indications are to be seen of a diaphragm. Yet alligators and crocodiles are feeble in respiration compared to their size, and, being cold-blooded animals, are very sluggish: they do not seem to suffer much inconvenience when their breathing is for a time suspended.

The respiring mechanism of birds approaches nearer to that of mammals, though having a great analogy to

the organs of winged insects. Their lungs are placed in equal proportions on both sides of the chest, whereby the body is nicely balanced during flight; also, they are much subdivided into small cells, presenting quite a spongy appearance. But besides the lungs in the chest, they have likewise air-sacs connected with them in the neck, the abdomen, and extremities; the bones, too, are hollow, and their cavities communicate with the lungs. The distension of the air-cells tends to keep the wings outstretched, as is shewn in dead birds that have been forcibly inflated, and their wings thereby expanded; and thus, in those birds which take long flights, their muscular action is economised by their increased power of respiration. The diffusion of so much air through the system renders the body of a bird light in proportion to its size, and this is materially increased by the heat and rarefaction of the air passing through it. Of all animals, birds require the most constant renewal of fresh air, and an atmosphere of the greatest purity: air which can be breathed by mammals is sometimes so charged with carbonic acid as to be fatal to birds.

Mammals—the class to which we ourselves belong—are furnished with a breathing-apparatus very complex and extensive, and this on a scale that varies according to the food and habits of the animal. Provision is made for the free removal of carbon, and for the renewal of a large supply of oxygen, without impeding motion or action. The lungs, divided and placed on each side of the chest, are kept in active play by the constant heaving up and down of the diaphragm, by which air is brought into the internal reservoir, and after having served its purpose, is again pumped forth. It is calculated that the bulk of air drawn into the human lungs and thrown out again, is about eighteen pints a minute, one thousand pints an hour, and three thousand gallons a day; but as we never entirely empty our lungs by an expiration of the breath, there is always a considerable quantity of air remaining within. Lindeneau asserts that, such is the vast area of our lungs, that the amount of surface they present to the blood is not less than 2642 square feet; for, besides that the tubes of the lungs branch into multitudes of vessels fine as hair, there are thousands of vesicles clustered around the extremity of each; and so exceedingly thin is the membrane covering them, that they offer no obstacle to the free interchange of carbon and oxygen. Over the whole of this extensive surface of the lungs is spread a net-work of minute vessels filled with blood, undergoing constant purification; the venous blood, that has gathered up impurity from all parts of the system, yields its carbon to the lungs, and is by them duly oxygenated. After this process, the air, impregnated by carbon, is expelled from the lungs by the effort of breathing, and discharged through the windpipe: it is of course impure, and should not be again inhaled. Health demands a constant supply of fresh atmospheric air, for otherwise the carbon of the system is not properly expelled, nor a sufficient supply of oxygen kept up. According as the air becomes impure, the functions of nutrition and secretion are depressed, and disease engendered which will hasten death.

But, besides the lungs, additional means are provided for still further keeping the blood pure. Most animals have numerous pores in their skin, communicating with the cellular substance beneath by means of spiral vessels: there are about seven millions of such pores scattered over the skin of a full-grown man. We are accustomed to think of them only as outlets of perspiration: but through them also carbon escapes and oxygen enters continually—inconsiderable in quantity compared with the air that passes through the lungs, and yet of much importance in purifying the blood and promoting the health.

Notwithstanding all the chemical changes that are going on, by which the atmosphere is more or less affected, yet, when there is free circulation, the air is

generally composed of the same elements, combined in the same proportion. Wherefore, seeing that we are provided with a breathing-mechanism skillfully adapted to carrying away what is noxious from the system, and for supplying us with that oxygen we need, it remains for us to take pains to keep the machinery in good order, and to be exceedingly careful to breathe the purest air. Cleanliness and ventilation are obviously indispensable to the maintenance of health, and therefore demand scrupulous attention. Is not this, at least, due from us, as a recognition of the goodness of the Creator, by whom we have been so skillfully and wonderfully made?

MELIBŒUS IN LONDON.

My friend Melibœus, as I propose to call him, albeit his real name is considerably shorter and less classical, has flocks, and herds, and a country-house, set in what his friends call a park, and his detractors meadow-land. His talk, when at home, is of bullocks and the proceedings in quarter-sessions. He as often as not omits to change his day-attire for the sombre garments in which Society has decreed gentlemen shall dine. He converses with his inferiors—gardeners, small-tenants, the clerk of the parish, and the like—with an ease that I envy and admire beyond everything, but cannot imitate. He can listen to conversation of which turnips are the topic for hours, without a sign of uneasiness. He takes a prodigious interest in the barometer and the state of the wind, as though he were about to embark upon some protracted and perilous voyage. He can distinguish not only horses and dogs, but even sheep, from one another, no matter how numerous may be the collection. He rises at an hour in the morning very near to that in which I, in London, go to bed. He believes what the newspapers tell him about the dangerous position of the constitution. He drinks Port wine. In short, my friend Melibœus is by profession a country gentleman—by profession, but not, as Mr Darwin would say, by natural selection. Very far from it. His own deep-rooted and ineffaceable idea upon that subject is, that nature intended him to dwell in Town. His admiration of the metropolis rises to fanaticism, and cannot be repressed by the voice of experience, which has been addressing him through my lips for years. His simplicity, though he has been often staying, as at present, under my roof (and I myself am far from being an enthusiast), in all matters connected with London life, reminds me of Sir Roger de Coverley. His eye, like that of the British law, regards every one as innocent until proof has been shewn to the contrary, and declines to receive the testimony of any person against himself, or herself. To him, the Arcadian and the Burlington Arcadian are both alike.

'What an innocent face!' says he, as the flower-girl proffers him her fragrant wares, which yet cannot quite overcome the aroma of that juniper her favourite liquor has left on her rosy lips. 'What a respectable man, to be brought down to a situation like that!' murmurs he compassionately, as the clerical gentleman in reduced circumstances offers us our choice between tracts and lucifers. If I did not insist upon carrying his purse for him, he would increase immorality and imposture to as great an extent as it is possible for one man to do.

The appearance of his benevolent countenance is the signal for contention at every cab-stand. At his lifted umbrella, the Hansoms shoot forth from

the rank like quills from the porcupine. He pities the four-wheelers, but he cannot deny himself the pleasure of travelling in the quicker vehicles. To urge the Hansom through the shrinking crowd shall be, he says, his calling, if he is ever much reduced in circumstances. Upon this theme he rises to eloquence. 'Consider,' cries he, 'the superior view which the driver commands of what is going on. He beholds the cause of the street-mob before it gathers—whether it is Punch or a wheel off, or a man in a fit, information which the less happily situated must procure from policemen, or less reliable sources; and he can see into second-floors, while others must confine their curiosity to the shop-windows. He possesses all the advantages, and none of the defects, of the camelopard. While his terrified fare is drawing himself together within at the approach of the collision that seems inevitable, he perceives afar off the port of safety—the narrow defile between the precipitous vans through which he will steer in safety, without abatement of his lightning speed. In comparison to the man he drives, he is a superior being indeed, independently of this matter of prescience. The fare knows nothing of him, but he knows everything of the fare, as, himself unseen, he watches him through his little trap-door.' Melibœus collects anecdotes from these heroes; and, in particular, I remember this one.

How that two wicked young men were playing cribbage in a Hansom on a Sunday night, and the dealer turned up the knave, but omitted to mark it, his companion likewise overlooking the same fact, and omitting to peg it; whereupon the driver, who had been interesting himself in the proceedings, and regarding the game from his point of vantage, exclaimed: 'Two for his heels!' in a voice that, to their terrified ears, savoured of the supernatural. And they did not play any more, through fear, nor did they ever know what power had reminded them of their oversight.

Melibœus insists that if Dr Johnson had ever travelled in a Hansom, he would never have written anything concerning the delights of a post-chaise. The ease and swiftness of its motion; the presence of the 'perpetual spring' which is suggested by it; the pictorial appearance of the person conveyed, framed, and, in wet weather, even glazed, and adorned with the shining red star over his forehead at night—'It reminds me,' says Melibœus, 'of some glorious and living reproduction of the Grecian friezes.' There is no figure upon barebacked steed, he contends, in the Elgin Marbles, that can be favourably compared with a gentleman sitting in his Hansom. Even the 'grumblers' or four-wheeled cabs are invested, in my friend's eyes, with a mysterious interest. 'Conceive,' exclaims he, 'the amount of human joy and suffering that must have been contained at various times in almost every cab of moderate standing. The bridegroom setting forth to the church, whence the more aristocratic carriage will convey him away, united with his Beloved Object for ever; the two friends for their month's holiday in Switzerland; the heir, from the lawyer's, with that long-looked-for cheque in his pocket, and with his soul dissolved in the expectation of a life of pleasure. And, on the other hand, the father, alone, and just departed from his dear ones, their kisses still upon his lips, for the distant land, whither he must needs go to win them bread; the spendthrift bound for the sponging-house; the forger, trembling at every stoppage, and beholding a detective in each face that meets his haggard eye. These are the romances that Melibœus conjures up at sight of a cab, though, as for me, I never reflect upon the subject except in so far as it is connected with pecuniary matters—whether my distance is

within or beyond the shilling or the eighteenpence. I never ride a sixpenny distance myself, but Melibœus often does, and invariably pays a shilling for it. A Londoner, like me, is the last person that should be applied to for an impression of London: it is the novelty and freshness of a scene which produce the first crop of ideas, and that is the only one that is worth gathering. It never struck me that we are all so beautiful as Melibœus says we are.

'What lovely women I see here,' cries he, 'walking, driving, riding! How attractive, too, in whatever they do! What altogether superior creatures to those of the country! What grace, what elegance, what apparel! There's no such thing as an ill-dressed lady in London, sir. What colours, what odours, what smiles!'

'Melibœus,' observe I, reprovingly, 'would Mrs M., whom you have left at Bullock Smithy, be gratified, do you think, by hearing these observations of yours?'

'Pooh, pooh,' replies he; 'I speak æsthetically. The men are as beautiful as the women. Almost everybody looks like a gentleman. What clothes they wear! How well-fitting, how elaborate! Nay, how clean and spotless even! One never meets with a soiled shirt-collar. How contentedly, too, in the hottest weather, do they retain those accurate gloves! They do not smile, indeed, so frequently as one might wish, but how *can* a man smile who is conscious that his appearance is perfection? How closely, and yet becomingly, does their hair stick to the side of their faces! How immovable are their moustaches! how stupendous, when viewed from behind, are their "bird's-nest" whiskers! What rubbish have the poets written about beauty unadorned! Nor men, nor women, ever approached so near to the angels as they do in Regent Street!'

'To look at, perhaps, Melibœus; but without some such limitation, I doubt whether the angels will thank you for the comparison.'

'I have nothing to do with that,' returns he; 'but judging from mere faces, there is not so much misery in town as there is in the country. [Happy Melibœus! Heaven keep thee from the knowledge of woe such as a million of hearts as kind as thine could never alleviate.] Even the very poorest have enjoyments within reach such as the field-labourer never knows; and this is especially true, I think, of the young. I do not speak of the crowds of children who, with mamma (and even papa, when he can get away from 'the courts' or 'the city'), enliven the Pantheon, the Polytechnic, and the exhibitions of all kinds with their presence, the contemplation of whose joyous eyes is a pleasure to fill one with religious gratitude—I saw a child in new possession of a Noah's Ark but yesterday, upon whom I am confident the noble story of Genesis was striking for the first time, and before whose mental vision the great waters were again covering the earth—but of the quite humble classes. What a pleasant calling for a youth, for instance, must be that of a London errand-boy! What various illustrations of the vast book of Human Nature must he behold every hour! How impossible must it be for him to grow up like our butcher-boy at Bullock Smithy, who has no idea of beauty beyond greasing the hair, or of harmony beyond dragging his steel along area-railings (as though they were harp-strings), whenever he is so fortunate as to meet with any! What humour and vigour are in their observations and repartees! What philosophy in their reflections upon men and things! I beheld two of them at St John's Wood this morning playing at leap-frog before one of those charming villas that are embosomed in as much foliage as any man, not a naked savage, can possibly require, and yet are within five minutes' drive of everything. They were far from being angry or impatient at the delay of the domestic in replying to their summons. On the contrary, "the

best of these willer people is," said one, "that they never is in a hurry to answer a bell, but always leaves a feller time for recreation."

I never hear any remarks worth repeating as I walk the streets, but Melibœus gets his note-book filled with them. Some of these are perfect epigrams—although generally requiring some little judicious curtailment and softening expurgation before they are fit for repetition in the drawing-room—but the majority of them are repartees and appeals to the feelings, for the most part to induce speed, as when an omnibus or other vehicle is stopping the way of the appealer. 'Will you please go and be buried,' was the last oburgation he heard from the lips of a long-delayed and much-enduring Hansom cabman, addressed to the cad of an Atlas—'will you please go and be buried, you red-haired insinuating hypocrite?' And the cad's reply was equally striking and original, although, I regret to state, not equally adapted for publication. Melibœus has an ear for all he hears, an eye for all he sees, a nose for everything of a pleasant kind that is to be smelt. He protests that in the early summer mornings he can detect the smell of new-mown hay in the Strand. I can more easily believe his statement, that he knows when he is approaching Atkinson's at a distance of exactly seven doors off upon a windless day. He delights in shops of all kinds, but especially in those of the perfumers, and protests that no bank of violets near Bullock Smithy is to be compared to them. He is never tired of flattening his nose against the windows of Fortnum and Mason, and wondering what is in the raised pies and those mysterious deal-cases. He remembers the names of all the well-advertised firms, and is delighted to recognise them in brick and mortar; and he perceives incongruities and humorous conjunctions in them which never strike the Londoner. Fortnum and Mason's, he wittily observes, should be Savory and More. Moon and Son, in Regent Street, causes his ideas at once to soar heavenwards; and Wilkinson and Kidd astonishes him with its exceeding vulgarity. 'Kid!' says he, with that modest smile which so rarely visits the lips of a town wit—'how much more classical it would read if they wrote Son.'

To walk in the streets with Melibœus is to see London for the first time again—to renew one's metropolitan youth. To this pleasure there are only two trifling drawbacks. He is excessively *exigent* in demanding to be shewn eminent personages. 'Is not that Lord Palmerston?' inquires he, whenever any elderly gentleman goes by with a straw in his mouth. 'Is not that Lord Brougham?' if he has plaid trousers. And once he was persuaded that he had beheld his Royal Highness the Prince Consort in a 'grumbler,' and once the Lord Bishop of Oxford upon the knife-board of a twopenny bus. 'At all events,' said he, when partially convinced of his error, 'you must allow that the resemblance was most remarkable.' And it is in vain I tell him that London streets afford a great many such resemblances. The other objection that there is to walking with Melibœus is, that he is so extremely curious. He taps the plate-glass of the jewellers' windows, and expresses his admiration of their thickness, without the least regard to what the proprietor, and especially what the police, may think of such a proceeding; and he takes up articles of value in his honest hands, and wishes that he could afford to buy them for Mrs. M., with a coolness that has rendered him the subject of suspicion in more than one establishment. I cannot tell everybody that this is my friend Melibœus from the country, whose ideas are as far from the commission of petty larceny as are those of his Grace of Lambeth. However, his opinions of life in London may be read in type without these two disadvantages. I propose to take upon myself the risk of walking about with him—which is not inconsiderable—and then

from time to time to communicate the more remarkable of his observations to the public, who will peruse them in safety.

CHINESE EMIGRATION.

It has long been a well-known saying, that 'if there's a man in the moon, he must be a Scotchman.' This statement, so expressive of the wandering and colonising habits of our countrymen, bids fair to be soon equally applicable to the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, and is in their case all the more singular, from their having been till lately a people the most secluded of any on the face of the globe.

For thousands of years, the Chinese had lived in rigid seclusion, known to us only by the vague accounts of the traveller or the missionary; but since the war-ships of England began to thunder at their door, and they have slowly and reluctantly been obliged to open port after port, myriads of them, from increasing intercourse with the 'outer barbarians,' have been led to emigrate and settle in other lands. We are convinced we do not exaggerate when we roughly calculate the numbers who have left at five hundred thousand. Of these, by far the largest proportion have gone to Australia and California, till at length a regular packet-system has been established between the last-mentioned place and China, which, in 1853, was the means of conveying monthly hundreds across the Pacific. This, of course, has been a spontaneous movement, induced by love of gain, since acquisitiveness forms no small element in a Chinaman's phrenological development. Again, for the last nine years, an extensive shipment of this people has been in force to the West India Islands, for the purpose of alleviating the scarcity in the labour-market; and lastly, they have been transported in numbers to two places which, owing to the unhealthy nature of the climate, and the harsh treatment they have received, have proved to them more like penal settlements—the Isthmus of Panama and Peru.

Those who have emigrated to Australia have been of a superior class, invariably paying their own passage-money. It is quite impossible to arrive at a correct estimate of the numbers that have sailed to Victoria and Sydney (an emigration first begun in 1852), since the embarkation has usually taken place on board shipping, through the hands of agents not British, and at ports entirely removed from English consular control, such as Swatow and Cumingmoon. That their numbers, however, must have been very great, may be gathered from the fact that, during the first nine months of 1854, no fewer than 2100 sailed from Canton and Hong-kong alone, while, in the succeeding year, the exodus from these two places amounted to twelve thousand. So overwhelming did this influx of Celestials become—though at first a sensible relief to the labour-market—that the government of Victoria tried in many ways to put a stop to it: a poll-tax was levied, a double license-fee for digging exacted, and even the ports were closed against them, but all in vain; the 'cute Yankee who embarked them quietly put them ashore in the adjoining colony of Adelaide, and from this they walked overland, a distance of three hundred miles. One little port, called Guichen Bay, the nearest on the coast of South Australia to the Victorian diggings, became such a favourite point of disembarkation, that no fewer than five thousand Chinese were encamped there at one time, much to the terror of the small settlement, which did not number above eighteen hundred or two thousand souls, and for whose protection not more than sixteen soldiers could be spared from Adelaide.

Up to December 1853, forty thousand had left Hong-kong alone for California, quite irrespective, of course, of thousands who sailed from other ports; and so vehement did the exodus become, that though they were embarked there at the rate of one thousand

per month, in April 1854, twelve thousand still remained waiting shipment to San Francisco, since every available vessel had been taken up, and those long condemned as unseaworthy sold for quite fabulous prices. During 1855, the number fell to three thousand and forty-two, due to the superior attractions of the Australian gold-fields. Owing to these causes, the greatest abuses became prevalent; ships were filled with passengers far in excess of what was either legal or safe; and in two instances, the master of the vessel, fearing the consequences, forced a body of them on shore at the moment of sailing, when the passage-broker having absconded, they looked in vain for a return of their passage-money, or even for food and shelter. In the case of one ship, this cruelty was practised at Singapore, where she touched on her way to the Australian colonies; while another was wrecked on the *Madjicosima* Islands, involving great loss of life.

The mode of collecting passengers for Californian ships was somewhat as follows: A passage-broker at Hong-kong—not unfrequently a man of straw, who was not to be met with after the vessel left—sent out his crimps to the mainland, and these, on the payment of about five dollars as bargain-money, gave to each candidate for shipment a bargain-ticket, sealed with the seal of the broker for whom they acted. With this ticket, the candidate proceeded to Hong-kong, where, on payment of the balance of passage-money, and re-delivery of the bargain-ticket, a passage-ticket was granted, securing to the holder a passage to California. Thus the broker received the money of ship-loads of passengers before he had provided, by the purchase or the charter of ships, for the accommodation of even a small number of them. If the charter-money was high, the ship-owner might often risk the confiscation of the ship at the port of debarkation, in consequence of an infringement of the passenger-law there, and still be sure of a profit on the transaction; and the ship might be despatched with the same certain profitable result, if the purchaser paid but a small sum for her acquisition, and received large amounts for passages.

The introduction of this people into the West India Islands partakes of a totally different nature. The Cuban emigration, conducted on behalf of the Spanish crown, has been organised for the last nine years, its principal dépôt being situated at Macao; and though at first believed to have been carried on on humane principles, has, during some recent investigations with regard to Chinese passenger-ships, disclosed a fearful amount of mortality, together with a most heartless system of kidnapping and slavery. The immense number of deaths has arisen mainly from overcrowding, since vessels employed in the Cuban service carry 50 per cent. more than is allowed in ships sailing under British superintendence. The Spanish dépôt at Macao was long under the care of Mr Jorge, who bestowed upon his charge much precaution and attention; and the arrangements of that establishment were considered so good as to be deemed worthy of imitation by our government, had they erected a dépôt at Hong-kong in 1853, to supply the West India Islands, as was at one time suggested. A return, however, given by the Consul-general in Cuba, informs us that out of 23,928 Chinese shipped for Havannah, from June 3, 1847, to December 31, 1857, no fewer than 3342, or 14 per cent, had died on the passage, the mortality ranging from 21 to 384 per cent., and much to our shame be it said, that after the Peruvian, Chilian, and Norwegian transports, the British have experienced the highest number of deaths, their average being 141—a fatality augmented in their case by many of the Chinese committing suicide by jumping overboard. The greatest loss occurred on board a Peruvian ship called the *Cord*, where 117 out of 292 died, owing, it is said, to bad water. But startling as these facts are, they

sink into insignificance when compared with the importation of the past nine months of the present year, which amounted to 50,000, 8981 having died on the passage; add to this 60,000 Africans within the same time, and some idea may be formed of the immensity of the slave-mart of Havannah, and how lucrative must be the trade which the Cuba planters are now carrying on at the expense of our colonies, since they can run such risks, and afford such prices to obtain labour. This immense increase in slave-traffic—for the Chinese, though nominally imported as 'Asiatic free colonists,' are nothing else but slaves, as will appear from the contract they enter into with the Spanish government—has owed its impulse lately to the deficiency in the American and Brazilian sugar-crop.

The importation of Chinese into British West Indian possessions has been principally directed to Jamaica, Trinidad, and Guiana, and was begun in 1853; but owing to the difficulty of obtaining females, was discontinued in 1854. At that time, on account of the exodus to Australia and California, seventy dollars per head was the contract rate of passage-money; and strict regulations were issued as to the seaworthiness of the ships, the dietary scale, the amount of wages contracted for (usually eight dollars per month), and the sum advanced, which was generally two months' pay. Notwithstanding all these inducements, few emigrants offered, partly because none had as yet returned from spying the land, as in the case of the gold-fields, and partly owing to the bad repute into which the West Indian emigration had sunk, from the cruelties practised in the Cuban service.

In 1858, the British government again suggested the expediency of furnishing the market of Trinidad and British Guiana with Chinese, especially as the sugar-growing colonies of France and Spain were deriving an unlimited supply of labour from Africa, India, and China. Accordingly, a renewal of the emigration was set on foot, and under the auspices of Mr Austin, the government emigration agent, is succeeding admirably. The old difficulty of getting females was overcome by advancing the purchase-money of a wife—for in China all wives have to be paid for—to a few of the respectable emigrants, leaving them to make their own selection of a spouse, on condition of the 'knot' being tied before the departure of the vessel. This commercial transaction in matrimony not looking very pretty in official documents, the plan was altered to that of offering a bonus equivalent to the wife's value to married emigrants. It was supposed, at first, that a small proportion of females would be sufficient, such as one to eight; but in the planters' requisitions to their agent in China, equal numbers, or one-third, were stipulated for. They also directed that the utmost care should be taken in selecting sound, able-bodied, agricultural labourers, free from the vice of opium-eating, and that every endeavour should be used to make them understand the difference between the comfortable settlements with guaranteed wages offered them, and the infamous designs of those engaged in the slave-trade to Cuba. In addition, to prevent any irregularities, they confined the shipment of coolies to the five ports placed under consular surveillance, and published a statement promising a minimum rate of wages of five dollars per month, and an advance of eight before starting, to be subtracted afterwards.

The shipment of Chinese to Panama was entirely conducted under American superintendence, and in their own ships, but was of course abandoned on the completion of the railway. We can find no record of the numbers shipped, the contract entered into, or the mortality on the voyage, but we can have little hesitation in inferring that the last must have been considerable, as they carried from twenty-five to fifty per cent. more than allowed by British laws,

and housed over their upper-deck, to gain further accommodation. We fear few, if any of the Celestials who assisted in the construction of that master-piece of railway-engineering, ever returned to the Flowery Land to tell the tale, since the miasmatic nature of the country, and the very summary method adopted by the American employes of putting down disturbances among their labourers, would rapidly cut off their numbers, and serve to give some colouring of truth to the statement, that every yard of that railway has cost a life. If the sufferings endured by those who were imported to Panama were great, they were light in comparison with the hardships borne by their countrymen in Peru, since, after being basely deluded with the idea of working on sugar-plantations or gold-fields, they are put ashore on the Chincha or Guano islands (as we have lately shewn in this *Journal*), and condemned to quarry the deposits, for a remuneration of three-pence a day, under the tyranny of a lash which has repeatedly inflicted death, and driven many to close a hopeless career of slavery by self-destruction. We have little information regarding the Peruvian transports. In the case of one ship, the *Libertad*, our government interfered, and prevented her departure, since she was not only unseaworthy, but had shipped a hundred more coolies than she was allowed to carry, all of whom were in a most wretched state of health. The numbers imported into Peru could not have been great, since, in 1853, the Peruvian consul at Canton gave notice that his government declined enforcing any further contracts entered into between shippers and coolies. If such has been the amount of mortality and suffering on board those ships which have issued from ports under British cognizance, what are we to infer with regard to those where no supervision has been exercised, either as to the vessel, or the numbers and health of the emigrants?

Let us see now what have been the efforts put forward by our own government to regulate and ameliorate the condition of Chinese ships. At the outset, it was found that the majority of the coolies were in total ignorance of the nature of their voyage, diet, and treatment, these points never having been explained to them by an interpreter; that they had been most fraudulently imposed upon by the brokers, their own countrymen, or by the parties employed in the collection of them, who were usually people of the lowest description, induced to engage therein from the immense profits which were derived, and who not unfrequently afterwards fell a sacrifice to the vengeance of the very people whom they had selected. On the other hand, not only had they been often shipped in a most careless manner, without any regard to the state of their health, but many pretended to be emigrants, for the sake of living free of expense on board the ship, and of deserting at the last moment prior to sailing, carrying with them an advance of wages. With such difficulties as these, reformation was no light task.

Orders were issued that every Chinese passenger-ship should be chartered as such, before contracting for emigrants, since, in many instances, part-payment had been taken from intending passengers when no ship was in view, and the brokers being unable to procure one, the people were defrauded of their money. Further, that they should be mustered, and the ticket of agreement thoroughly explained to all, in the presence of the emigration agent or a magistrate; and that, on any refusing to go, they should be immediately landed, a breach of which last regulation, in the case of the *John Calvin*, was the source of great mortality and trouble. Moreover, as in many instances the deception had been practised of nominally clearing out for a port within seven days' sail of Hong-kong, and actually concealing the subsequent intention to proceed to distant countries, a subterfuge which enabled the ship to leave without emigration papers,

and avoid the restrictions of the Chinese Passenger Act—an ordinance was passed to the effect, that vessels clearing outwards to any such port with the intent therefrom to commence the voyage of more than seven days' duration, should be deemed to have commenced it at Hong-kong.

By these means, as well as by obliging every passage-broker to enter into a bond to the amount of five thousand dollars, our government hoped to root out the disgraceful traffic which was being at that time (1858) carried on, mainly by 'citizens of American republics, northern and southern, by one French, and one German firm.'

As until the renewal of Chinese emigration to the West India Islands, none but medical men of their own nation had usually accompanied them across the seas, we were left much in the dark as to the cause why so great mortality occurred, even where the regulations had been scrupulously enforced. Three ships, however, which arrived in Havannah in 1858, after embarking an aggregate of eleven hundred and six passengers, and losing two hundred and forty on the voyage, having been furnished with English surgeons, we derive from their reports some information regarding the great loss of life. The majority of the people embarked in these ships were in a most unhealthy and unsound condition, 'feeble, sickly, emaciated wretches, whom hardship, disease, and hunger had reduced to the lowest ebb of vitality,' more especially those called 'Tartar men,' who come from the interior, many hundred miles above Canton, and who, according to the surgeons' report, were so feeble in constitution, and so predisposed to disease, that they were hardly on board before they fell sick, and nearly all died. Not one of these eleven hundred people had been subjected to medical examination before embarkation. It was the opinion of these surgeons, that opium-smoking was the source of much of the constitutional weakness and inability to withstand the ravages of disease. They did not advocate the entire abstinence, but the gradual reduction of this habit, or the substitution of tobacco if practicable. They also considered that it would be advisable, in future instances, to put the emigrants at first on a reduced scale of diet, and gradually raise them to the full allowance, since the sudden change to repletion, from having previously been fed scantily, as most of them had led lives of privation and precarious subsistence, was the cause of many of the diseases which swept them off. It must be supposed that such wretched specimens of humanity are different from those for which our West India planters are paying so high, and were gathered without discrimination, since, in reply to the question, why they embarked men whose physical condition offered so slender a chance of seeing the end of the voyage, the surgeon answered that they were the only coolies to be had at the time who were not suffering from disease.

Let us compare now the position of the emigrant in the British West India Islands and that of his fellow-labourer in Cuba. In the former case, he agrees to serve on sugar-plantations for five years from the day on which he lands, it being within his option to foreclose this arrangement in three years by paying fifty, or in four years, twenty-five dollars. A liberal advance of twelve dollars is allowed him prior to leaving, but he assents to the repayment of this by a deduction of one dollar monthly. It is stipulated that his wages shall be paid weekly, and shall not be under those received by unindentured labourers, and that he shall be provided with medical attendance and hospital accommodation, if sick. In addition, supposing the plantation to pass into other hands, he is not bound to serve longer than the unexpired period of his term. Nothing can be more fair; it is a straightforward contract between master and servant. How different is it with the Cuban emigrant! His contract, which is negotiable or transferable, binds him to

work for eight years, either for private parties or government—including, of course, the mines—the selection of employment to be entirely at the discretion of his master. The latter may also fix the length of the day's labour, exact work on the Sunday or not, and demand that days of sickness shall not be computed as part of the term of service. During any illness, his wages—at the maximum rate, four dollars per month—and his wretched daily allowance of half a pound of salt meat, and two and a half pounds of vegetables, are to cease. In his agreement, too, the poor Chinaman renounces all right to transfer himself to another master, to sue or take action for the recovery of wages, or claim protection as a colonist under the ordinances issued by the Spanish government. While, to bind their heavy burdens tighter, the bondsman signs to the effect, that though aware that the earnings of free labourers and slaves are far greater, still he will conform himself to the wages stipulated. Surely this is nothing else than unadulterated slavery, carried on at present at the extensive rate of shipment of five to six thousand per month, to check which all the philanthropic endeavours hitherto put forward by our government have proved utterly fruitless.

It becomes us to remember, while sympathising with the relatives of those who have fallen in the recent and previous wars with China, and while deploring the atrocities and treachery for which the Chinese are so justly stigmatised, that they are at present themselves suffering under the yoke of a galling servitude at the hands of more civilised nations.

BY LIMITED MAIL.

I THINK there is no expenditure upon which persons of small means look back with such regret as on money spent in travelling. 'There is nothing,' as prudent housewives say, 'to shew for it.' When you are once *there*, at the journey's end, you feel how very much better it would have been to have walked the distance. You have spent four pounds (suppose) in coming by first-class, and yet, behold there are a number of your fellow-creatures, very little more frouzy and wretched-looking than yourself, who have arrived simultaneously and with equal safety by the third-class, for thirty shillings! How nice it would be, you think, to have got that differential two-pounds-ten in your pocket, instead of having dropped it into the maw of a railway company, to be spent in amalgamation bills upon parliamentary lawyers! Very few people not in the Upper Ten Thousand can afford to despise two-pounds-ten; but, on the other hand, a very large number afford, or think they can afford, to despise third-class passengers.

We shrink, like the poet's too fastidious baronet, from 'the raw mechanic's' dirty thumb—with which he is accustomed to point out objects of interest during a journey. We do not like to be offered the refreshment of gin out of a soda-water bottle, with a slice of that Bologna sausage which he has kept perhaps overlong in his hat, and wrapped round with his pocket-handkerchief. The angels doubtless weep to see vain man behaving in this manner to his fellow-mortal. Hospitality should never be rejected, however humble, nor a kind action despised. The meanness lies not in the meagreness of the fare, but in the pride of the wayfarer. Still, though a dinner of herbs, where love is, is better than a Guildhall banquet, sandwiches flavoured with garlic, and spread upon the *Daily Telegraph* for a table-cloth, are not attractive to the palate, and least of all when anybody is looking on. I lunched once upon such a delicacy in the company of an intelligent and certainly a most hospitable journeyman stone-mason, and I shall never forget my foolish trepidation at the station we chanced to stop at during the repast. Suppose

one's cousin in the Blues had happened to look in! Shouldn't I have been the bluer of the two? It is idle to affect to despise these social distinctions; no gentleman—however philosophic—would relish leaving his friends on the platform to travel with his servants in the second-class. He may say he wouldn't mind, but he would mind; and though he should lie on his back (after the impressive Eastern manner), and take oath to the contrary, this writer would not believe him.

Some feeble-minded persons endeavour to persuade themselves, that the second-class is cooler and more pleasant in summer than the more expensive carriage; but, at all events, they do not succeed in persuading others. Blinds, and curtains, and spring-cushions are far from being engines of discomfort; nor are rattling windows, and a seat so shiny that we can scarcely keep on it, desirable for travel. For the above reasons, I have almost always been a first-class passenger, and have expended much unnecessary moneys upon railways without the slightest acknowledgment from director or committee. They have plenty of Votes of Thanks and pieces of plate for comparatively unworthy objects, but to the persistent first-class passenger *who can't afford it*, they offer nothing whatever. And yet it is upon us they thrive, and not upon the few whose circumstances entitle them to travel luxuriously. Besides this extravagance, consequent upon my thus being a victim to 'Mrs Grundy'—besides the ordinary high fare which I pay without any sort of justification—I find I cannot journey so cheaply as other travellers. My expenses are always about fifteen per cent. above those of any other person who accomplishes the same distance. I find it somehow necessary to surround myself before starting with a little library of 'light literature,' which I soon discover to be very heavy reading, and with 'readable books' that I am quite unable to get through. I entomb myself in newspapers of all shades of opinions, which I skim over in a quarter of an hour, and then don't know how to get rid of. The very sight of them, crumpled, and crumbly, and mysteriously smeared as they soon get to be, becomes hateful to me, and—raven-like—I hide them carefully away between the cushions, whence they are sometimes extracted by a too officious porter, and stuffed into my cab, as I leave the station, poor and penitent. I used to derive some amusement from 'flying' these out of window on the railway, but that relaxation is now denied me. An old lady in the next compartment to mine once delayed the Great Western Express at Taunton, and terrified all the passengers about 'a baby in long clothes,' which she insisted upon it, had been thrown out of some carriage past her window: and nothing would satisfy her until the station-master acceded to her prayer, that he would 'set the telegraph in motion,' which operation she seemed to consider was a remedy for every ill. I asked her whether she thought it was a girl or a boy, and she replied: 'Oh, a girl, a girl; a dear little innocent girl!' But she was wrong there, for it happened to be the *Evening Mail*—with some half-dozen other newspapers wrapped up in it, of which I had vainly hoped never to hear again.

My body, too, has as many cravings as my mind. I purchase food at all the stations where it can be got, and I don't like it when I get it. Railway-pastry is an abomination, and where is one to put *that* to, I should like to know, without offence to anybody? A gigantic oyster *pâté*, with but one bite out of it, once presented itself to me for forty miles stuck to a red lamp outside my carriage, and maintained there by the speed at which we flew. Everybody who put his head out of window on that side must have seen it likewise, and to watch the thing loose its hold—like an exhausted bivalve—and fall and drop as the train slackened, was a sickening sight. Of course, in a journey of any length, I take care to

equip myself with extra cushions, hot tins, &c.; and although the Company supplies these, I always reward the individual hand which ministers to my comfort. That touch of the hat from the guard is worth half-a-crown of anybody's money who is not a peer of the realm, which (by a singular freak of Nature, who has endowed me with all the taste and characteristics of that titled class) I do not happen to be; while the pantomime, as he picks up my shilling from the seat with the air of *recovery*—of having previously dropped it there himself—and murmurs, 'Thank 'ee, sir,' with his head in the carpet-bag he places so carefully beneath me, is equally satisfactory in its degree. It is partly, perhaps, in consequence of these habits of mine, that I find all guards and porters excessively affable. In the gamut of social courtesy I would place government officials at the one end, and railway officials at the other, and it will be conceded by every one of experience, that I could not have paid the latter a neater compliment. Who ever heard of a public servant (as the former class is satirically termed) offering you even a chair to sit down upon, far less a pillow for the small of your back, and a stool to help make up a bed to sleep upon? Yet these accommodations are offered to me whenever I travel by night upon any railway, and I am far from rejecting them.

They were placed in my carriage in January last, when I started for Z. in the Limited Mail from A. Ten hours of travel through impenetrable darkness and almost arctic frost lay before me, and I was certainly not to be blamed for making myself comfortable. I had half a mind to suffer some other people to come into the carriage, for the sake of their animal warmth, but upon the whole I decided to be alone; they might have objected to smoking, or made themselves obnoxious in some other respect.

It is a peculiarity of long railway journeys, that they are accomplished with much greater rapidity (comparatively speaking) than are short ones. Before I have fairly settled myself, and begun to draw pictures in my mind of the discomforts which second-class passengers must be suffering (which I always find very soothing and excusatory), we are at B. junction—a place which it quite wearies me to reach, when I am scarcely going any further, and by day. A glare of lights, a tramping of feet, a ringing of bells, and we are away again; tearing through the gloom with a threatening, ominous rattle, as though we defied the powers of air to stop us, and anon with a screech of triumph because they didn't. The oscillation is considerable, but not unpleasant, and acts upon my system as the rocking of a cradle affects a well-principled infant. I like it. I like to lie, swayed from side to side in a half-dream, with every now and then a bump, which is not quite a jerk, to suggest that I must not go to sleep too soon, or I shall lose half the charm of the sensation. I like the short, sharp report as we shoot the bridges, and the long groan in the tunnel, where we get so very serious, and the gradually lighter tone we take as we come out of it, like a gentleman who has been near death's door, and in a sad fright, but is now convalescent, and all right again.

Whir-r-r-r! What is that, if it isn't a cock-pheasant rising? It must have been C., but my eyes were shut, and before I could open them, there was not a lamp within sight to shew that we have been near the dwellings of men. How very fast we are going! And yet, because of the frost, we are warned to be careful, and allowed forty-five minutes' 'law' upon the whole journey. Why did they not strike the axles with hammers at B., too, as they did at A., and should do, the papers tell us, at every station? But, after all, what do the papers know about it? 'The railway-people must know best, of course,' I mutter to myself; and I say 'of course,' because I am getting drowsy. They are

always particularly careful about these night-trains; the best wood, the best iron, the best steam—Pshaw! what nonsense am I talking to myself? Did I say the best steam? How sleepy I must have been! Ha, ha! Eh? Oh, I thought somebody spoke. . . . I wonder whether that sound is the sea, or no! We must be near the sea now—the sea that I have always seen here (for I never travelled this way by night before), bright and sparkling, and speckled with sails, but which now might be ink itself, for all that I can tell to the contrary. Suppose it *was* ink; with the sand close by for drying purposes, what a capital place the sea-side would be for authors! The mention of authors makes me even drowsier than before. . . . How lonely one feels, and yet how far from dissatisfied! It is a world without a sun, but then there is nobody to dispute my supremacy in it. I seem to myself to be the one representative left of the great human family, and to be hurried about everywhere at fifty miles an hour, that all space may have the advantage of my presence. . . . Whir-r-r-r! Another station, but which, I cannot tell, for I have been asleep, and lost count. How cold it is! I wish I had brought a third railway-wrapper. Why does not the guard bring me another hot-water tin? He might do it, if he had any real regard for me. Those guards can climb about, no matter at what pace we may be going. I gave him half-a-crown. The train is slackening speed. Heavens, what an ass I was to open that window! What *could* I expect to see, except the reflection of my own face as I let it down? The night-wind poured in like a knife, though it was but for an instant, didn't it? It would have been more agreeable, after all, if I had somebody to speak to. I wish they had hammered those axles when we were at B. However, it is a comfort to think that the best iron, the best wood, and the best—The train is slackening. The engine shrieks like a benighted demon, and endeavours to 'shake' upon a note altogether too high for it. Never mind. I don't let that window down again for ten collisions; at least, I will be shattered to atoms, warm. What a despairing, hopeless yell that last was! Our engine has given it; it is vanquished, though it spurts and curses still. We are at K.—two hundred and fifty miles of journey done—and there is a quarter of an hour allowed for refreshments.

Another peculiarity of night-trains is this, that there is somehow always more time to spare at the stopping-stations than in the day; this is perhaps because we expect to have less, and are therefore especially expeditious; but, at all events, so it is. The train has disgorged a number of dishevelled, ill-looking persons from all classes, who crowd into the refreshment-room. Their attire is disordered, their neckerchiefs awry, their eyes half closed, their expressions stupid, and yet not unconscious of disrespectability. They swallow boiling coffee, which they in vain endeavour to cool with boiling milk. They toss it off with grins of agony, and then scuttle off to the train again like rabbits to a warren. 'There is no hurry,' says the presiding priestess from behind her tea-urn (and how different looks she in her clean cap and cherry-coloured ribbons, from the rest of us!), but we believe her not. We have heard legends of persons who have been beguiled by that syren, and compelled to remain at K. for twenty-four hours. And yet the glorious creature, who has risen at 1 A.M. for our especial convenience, was no deceiver, though so fair! We have nearly five minutes to spare, after all. But is there not the State-carriage to look at, brilliantly lighted up as for a feast, and doubtless inhabited by swells? The general public therefore surges that way, flattens its nose against the windows, perceives unmistakable nobility in the air and attitudes of the occupants—who are naturally disconcerted by the intrusion—and remarks that it is a fine thing to be lords and ladies. Upon this, 'the suite' in the

side-carriage flattens its nose in turn from the inside, and denounces such conduct as reprehensible, and appeals to the authorities for redress.

'O yes, ah,' returns the general; 'we suppose we may look where we like in a free country; and altercation would be imminent, but that the guard arrives, and reads the Riot Act with, 'Take your seats!' and so disperses the assembly.

Roar, rattle, jump, whirl, on again through the night, half the dark way devoured, and the other half invisibly disappearing. It takes some time to reduce the excitement supervening upon the hot coffee and cold platform; but when we do sleep, we sleep all the heavier. Only once, in a half-dream, as the train stops at some place unknown, we hear, amid the ringing of axles, the words, 'Not safe!' and the reply, 'It will last to Z., depend upon it!' Did I really hear it? Stuff and nonsense! By the Limited Mail is always the safest travelling; the best wood, the best iron, the best steam—and I fall asleep again over my favourite formula.

I wake to perfect consciousness with a jerk that dislocates every bone in my body, and just in time to see the lamp extinguished, and hear both the windows fall down into their sockets with a crash. A long-forgotten picture of a farmhouse where I once lived in distant Westmoreland, and of the face of a friend that is dead, flashes unbidden across my mind, before it settles down upon the reality of my situation. The carriage is off the line, I know, for we seem to be going over a ploughed field of solid iron. It is awful travelling, for it may be the road that leads to Death. No. I hear the engine rattling its chains like a horrid ghost, as it breaks away from us. Thank Heaven, then at least it cannot take us over an embankment, to be dashed to pieces, or into a canal, to be drowned like cats in a bag. But awful shrieks from oppressed human beings turn my blood even colder than does the icy wind. Others, then, have not escaped as I have done, with fright and bruises. A lantern or two glimmers across my window, and I implore of the passers-by to open the door for me, which is jammed quite tight by the collision. I am informed, in a cold dry tone, that that is the business of the Company's servants, and that it is indecorous of me to discommode a passenger amateur—to wit, the unknown speaker—by any such superfluous request. So I squeeze myself out of window, and drop down upon a heterogeneous heap of something—an assemblage of 'the best wood and the best iron,' which has splintered off a neighbouring carriage. That carriage, however, still stands upon its wheels, in the counterfeit presentment of a carriage; but this which I am approaching, which has the lanterns round it, and the circle of dark forms, has no resemblance to a carriage whatever. It is a mere mass of ruin, without door, or window, or floor, or wheel, crushed and flattened together; and from within it come forth the shrieks that have grown fainter since I first heard them, and are fading into groans and murmurs. What I dimly discern cumbering the earth here was, a minute ago, a first-class carriage, filled with people sleeping, or eating, or getting their personal luggage ready for the terminus at Z., which they will now arrive at, poor creatures, in quite another fashion. What is to be done? Nothing can be done, says the grave guard, without pickaxes and crow-bars, which have already been sent for. A light has gone north and a light has gone south for these things, and for doctors and brandy, and above all things, to stop the trains up and down. In the meantime, we shiver in the cold and darkness (for one would as soon think of entering a carriage now for comfort, as a sepulchre), and the thirteen poor wretches under the ruin shiver, too, after a ghastlier manner.

'How did it happen?' inquires a passenger.

'Axle broke, sir,' interposes an official sharply.

'They will break in these frosty nights.'

'We told you at X. it would break,' exclaims a voice indignantly.

'And they said it would last us to Z.,' I chimed in on a sudden.

'Yea,' confirms the voice, 'they did; and it's manslaughter, and nothing else.'

Whereupon the official moves away from us into the gloom, as from persons who are dangerous for a well-regulated mind even to listen to.

We are still around the ruined carriage, comforting the unhappy folks as well as we can, when a great cry arises that the L. up-express is upon us, and there is a universal panic. The piteous wail of the wounded and imprisoned is unheeded (and indeed, we are quite powerless to help them), and all that can do so, leap into an enormous hedge which happens here to fringe the line. We see the fiery eyes at the mouth of the tunnel, and expect immediate ruin upon ruin; but the engine-driver has perceived the danger-signals, and is only bringing his train up to the halt. So we descend with more or less of difficulty from our unpleasant elevation, and I find that the thorns have (among other damages) grievously injured my hat.

Not until two hours are the victims liberated from their dreadful prison, for the axe and bar must be used tenderly, lest they hazard yet again the imperilled life. Many have broken bones and broken heads—they hold these latter with their hands as though they were indeed splitting—but there is, thank God, no burden (such as we had all dreaded to behold) borne forth and carried away in silence, with a cloth over it, upon which, no matter what the shape it takes, is written Death. From that extremity of misfortune all are mercifully preserved, for the present at least; but enough of woe has happened to make me sad and serious as I step into the special train that has been sent from Z. to convey us and the wounded. It is not so, however, with my fellow-passenger, a commercial traveller of elastic disposition, who, as he takes his seat, finds something consolatory in travelling first-class, after paying only second-class fare, even under such circumstances as ours.

'Ah,' observed I gravely, 'but it was a first-class carriage that was so smashed, remember.'

'It was so, sir,' he assented cheerfully—'shivered to lucifer-matches, sir. I have been in half-a-dozen of these little accidents, and I know nothing can stand 'em; no, not if you were in a cage of cast-iron.'

'Dear me,' said I; 'but surely by the Limited Mail'—

'My dear sir,' quoth he impatiently, and snapping his fingers, 'the mail is limited, but not the liability of the passengers.'

An official person of sympathising aspect, and attired as the chaplain to the Company, here opened the door, and took down our names and addresses, with many earnest inquiries as to how we felt ourselves.

'That was very civil of him,' observed I to the bagman, who had not made quite so light of his bruises to this kind inquirer as his high spirits had led me to expect he would have done: 'it was certainly a most Christian attention.'

'All humbug, sir,' replied my friend, 'I assure you. Actuated by the purest commercial motives, he came to see that we were alive and well, and not in a condition to make any claim for compensation. He also wished to make a complete list of the passengers, lest more should pretend to be injured by the Limited Mail to-night than ever travelled by it.'

'What a world of treachery and deceit we live in!' observed I reflectively.

'Very much so, sir,' rejoined my philosophic companion; 'and let us be thankful we do live in it, and without broken bones.'

'I hope at least,' said I, 'that those persons who have been less fortunate will obtain redress. I have

injured my hat—you observe—my new hat, and shall myself demand another.' And then I went on to tell him of what I had half-dreamed, half-heard about the axle lasting us to Z.

'In cross-examination, sir, they would prove that you had dreamed the whole of it.'

I then informed him how satisfactorily I had been corroborated by an unknown witness.

'Yes, sir, and he will remain unknown, you may rely upon it, to all but the Company's solicitors. No human being will ever hear of that too intelligent traveller again.'

'Good Heavens!' cried I, appalled by the preternaturally significant manner of the speaker, 'you do not mean to say that they will make away with him?'

'I do, though; just that, and no less. I don't mean to say,' added he assuringly, 'that they will Burke him; but they will certainly make him safe. That was another of the reasons why that clerical gentleman was so solicitous in his inquiries. And as for you, sir, you will be convicted of "conspiracy" and "intent to defraud," if you open your mouth.'

By this time we had arrived at Z; and I was glad enough to find myself in a Hansom, unassisted by 'the best steam,' and upon the king's highway.

I read in the second editions of that morning's paper, that the Limited Mail upon the A. and Z. Railway had met with 'a slight delay' near the X. station, in consequence of the unavoidable breaking of an axle, and that some persons had suffered 'contusions.' Nobody ever got compensation, although many wanted it, for, as the bagman had predicted, the too intelligent witness was not forthcoming. As for me—my own application for a new head-covering being treated with disdain—I was not going to be indicted for conspiracy for the sake of other people. Nevertheless, the thought does sometimes strike me that the commercial traveller may himself have been interested in dissuading me from such a course. Do the railway companies keep bagmen as well as chaplains always in readiness to run down to the scene of a calamity, I wonder? However that may be, ever since that 'slight delay between X. and Z.' I travelled by day-trains as long as the frost lasted; nor was I tempted again, notwithstanding 'the best iron and the best wood,' of which it is always constructed, into a Limited Mail.

A SUNDAY IN SEPEY.

ABOUT half-way up the valley of Les Ormonds, where it makes a turn towards the range of the Diablerets Mountains, you come upon the little village of Sepey. It consists of an irregular congregation of some thirty chalets, built of spruce-fir, browned with age and weather, carved outside like Swiss toy-houses, and ornamented with texts out of the Bible. It is about 3000 feet above the level of the sea, and often hardly below that of the clouds, which sail up from the great Rhone valley, and beat like huge waves against the face of the hill on which the village sits. The sides of the valley are covered with rich pastures, which, higher up, pass into pine-forests, and are crowned with bare peaks of granite and limestone. It is traversed by a stream which tumbles along at the bottom of a deep ravine, picking up many mountain-rivulets by the way; that at Sepey pays toll for its passage in being made to turn the dripping wheels of several rude saw-mills. The little inn at which we are staying, and which possesses neither clock nor bell, looks right down the valley, across the Rhone, into the Valais Alps, the snows of the Dent-du-Midi being set as in a frame by the dark pine-forests of Les Ormonds. Close

below our window is one of the saw-mills, beyond it a bridge, over which a steep short path leads up to the church. The little mill, waited on by a man with the remains of a large crop of dry hair, which looks as if it had been badly bitten off, jogs on throughout the week, eating up trunk after trunk, and pausing only to be sharpened, which last process is enough to give the toothache to the whole village. To-day, however, it is at rest, the wooden trough of water, drawn from the parent-stream, being turned aside from the wheel, and leaping away as if glad of its holiday. The attendant with the jagged head who files and feeds the saw, has on his best suit—dark-blue frieze dittoes, coat swallow-tailed and short-waisted—and is leisurely walking up the hill towards the church; indeed, all Sepey and his wife are on the road, beside many from the numerous chalets which are dotted about the sides of the valley. Having ascertained that the only service was to take place at ten, we joined the stream, and reached the churchyard twenty minutes before that hour. Passing through a little black gate with the words, 'Dust thou art,' in French, roughly painted upon it, we found several groups of peasants, in their Sunday clothes, lounging about, and exchanging the news of the week. Being nearly all dairy-people, the important question of whose cow had calved was no caricature of their inquiries. The women wore dark limp woollen gowns, tight in the sleeve, and short in the waist; their head-dress consisted of a black-silk or velvet cap, generally surmounted by a large flat straw-hat, with a crown shaped like a hand-bell, much too small for the head. Many carried books wrapped up in clean pocket-handkerchiefs.

As we entered the churchyard, an old man in blue frieze took his pipe out of his mouth, and hat off his head, wishing us good-morning. He told us that the pasteur from Leysin, a neighbouring village, was coming to help their own, because the latter intended to have his first baby baptized that morning. Finding we were English, he chatted on. 'There was much *amitié* between the English and Swiss,' I asked, knowing that the valley of Les Ormonds was famous for its riflemen, whether he knew that some Swiss had taken part in the late great shooting-match near London. No; he had heard nothing about it; he was only a 'pauvre montagnard,' and asked whether it was not necessary to cross the sea before reaching England. The valley was his world, and the pasteur his hero—a 'bon pasteur'—he always addressed a poor man in his working-clothes as 'Monsieur'; a 'très bon pasteur,' who had no pride, because, as he taught them himself, 'Notre Seigneur said the servant was not greater than his Lord.'

We looked into the church, an old stone-building, with a blunt steeple. It consisted of a nave and chancel, both filled with rough deal-seats, turned towards the communion table, which was set under the chancel arch. The pulpit, which was also reading-desk, and had an ominous hour-glass fixed handy by it, in a little frame, stood close by. It was then occupied by the clerk or precentor, who was reading the Bible, in a clumsy drawing way, to a few old women, till the service should begin.

We took our seats, the people dropping in, until the church became nearly full. The men and women sat apart. As they entered, many stopped inside the door, and placing their hands reverently together, and shutting their eyes, put up a short prayer. Presently, the pasteur of Leysin, in a black gown with very large bands, came in. As he walked towards the pulpit, he bowed to the congregation, several of whom rose to return his salutation. Having performed his private devotions in a corner, he nodded to the clerk, who, still remaining in the pulpit, read the ten commandments, the people standing. This done, he shuffled down, and the pasteur took his place.

He was a large heavy man, with a tremendous cold in his head. After an exhortation and a few prayers, the people sat down, and he gave out a hymn. Having no book, we could not see the words, but they were sung, or rather bleated, to the Old Hundredth tune, very slowly. This was the only part the people took in the service. Not a single response did I hear, the minister repeating even the creed by himself. A collection was made during the hymn, by a man who went round with a large metal soup-ladle. After the hymn came the sermon, then the Old Hundredth again, a few more prayers, and the benediction. The prayers were read, the sermon was extempore, or at least without book. After the blessing, many left, but several stayed to see the pasteur of Sepey's child baptized.

There was no font, but a large slab of black stone under the pulpit, on which—the clerk having gone out to fetch it—sat a small covered metal jug of water. The pasteur, who baptized his own child, performed the first part of the service from the pulpit, and then walking down, poured water first into the hollow of his hand, and then on his infant, without taking it into his arms. The kind-hearted man nearly broke down in uttering the solemn words of baptism, and set off a number of poor women, who shewed the sympathy between them and their pasteur by the tears which stole down their honest brown cheeks.

After the baptism, a herd of hobbledheys were drawn up in front of the pulpit, and catechised. Poor boys! the pasteur was very kind, but they didn't half like it. There was the strange minister from Leysin sitting in front within two yards, and some gentlefolks from Aigle, who had come up to see the pasteur's child christened, and dine with him afterwards—for we met a lot of good things going up to his chalet as we walked down into Sepey—and besides, I was sitting right opposite to them, looking as if I knew all about it. So they shuffled, scratched their heads, dived into the pockets of their Sunday-breeches, and consulted the roof with the usual success, for the pauses became more and more awful, until the pasteur singled out the best, and put him through his paces for the encouragement and recovery of the rest.

The following Sunday, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, the congregation quite filling the church—the number of men being as great as that of the women. All communicated. The pasteur stood at one end of the table, the men walking up first in line, and receiving the bread and wine standing, without the pause usual in English churches; the remainder of the congregation sung meanwhile. Their behaviour was most devout. Great independence and politeness are accompanied by simple piety among these people. The men are electors, riflemen, and communicants. Universal suffrage, religion, and civility may be found here in prosperous conjunction. No one thinks he lowers himself by touching his hat to a stranger. I met a man the other day toiling up a steep mountain-path with a huge bundle on his back—we had never seen, and probably shall never see each other again—he took off his hat with a cheerful, 'Bon jour, monsieur.' This was often the salutation of the hay-makers across a fence, as we walked along the road. Only one child begged, and that badly. Education is free—the master being paid by the commune. The children attend school 36 hours in the week, with the exception of a long vacation in the summer, when the cows are taken to the high-pastures, and the whole force of the valley is employed to tend them there.

At church, we remarked the absence of young children; except the louts who were catechised, most were grown up. There seemed to be none in the congregation—which consisted of about four hundred—above the rank of peasants. Indeed, the land is

mainly occupied by small-proprietors, who work with their own hands. There is not a gentleman's house anywhere in either of the Ormond valleys; chalets, and nothing but chalets, sometimes with, but oftener without a small garden, are scattered over both hillsides. The accommodation for the cows is very much like that for their masters, the animals being often stabled beneath the dwelling-room. The people are hardy; outdoor-work, however, makes many of the women's faces as brown as mahogany. Though well fed and clothed, they seem dull, as if grown rather like the animals they tend. This idea is helped by the large oxlike eye of many of the women, and the slow measured stride with which, like cows, they move along.

Milk and cheese is their main, and for a short while, when they are up on the mountains, their only food. They export large quantities of butter, that of this valley being the most celebrated in the canton. They have no vines or ploughs—hay, with the exception of a few gardens of corn and cabbages, being the produce of the land. No place reminds you more of the fact, that Switzerland is the dairy of Europe, than the valley of Les Ormonds. There are few, moreover, at which a pleasanter stay may be made by those who do not care to travel with a crowd of English. The neighbourhood abounds with walks. The glaciers of the Diablerets, not very striking, but enough to swear by, pine-woods, granite peaks, unknown to Murray, between 7000 and 8000 feet high, commanding most glorious views, comprising the Jungfrau, Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, Mont Blanc, and the lakes of Geneva and Neuchâtel, are all within easy reach. The rate of living is cheap: at Sepey, we pay four francs a day each. For this they provide breakfast, dinner—Yvorne wine included—and tea, besides lodging, &c. Our fare is abundance of beef and veal, good vegetables, fruit—butter, honey, cream, milk, and cheese, at discretion.

The valley is easily reached. Steam-boats leave Geneva for Villeneuve twice a day; from thence to Aigle, at the entrance of the valley, is a run by rail of a few miles. Thus the jaded Londoner may pack up his carpet-bag, and in forty-eight hours pass from the bustle of Piccadilly to one of the quietest retreats in the valley of Les Ormonds, out of the high-road of tourists, and in the midst of some of the most varied scenery in Switzerland.

A L A S!

SINCE, if you stood by my side to-day,
Only our hands could meet,
What matter that half the weary world
Lies out between our feet;

That I am here by the lonesome sea,
You by the pleasant Rhine—
Our hearts were just as far apart
If I held your hand in mine!

Therefore, with never a backward glance,
I leave the past behind;
And, standing here by the sea alone,
I give it to the wind.

I give it all to the cruel wind,
And I have no word to say;
Yet, alas! to be as we have been,
And to be as we are to-day!

PHILIP CARY.

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